

Ruth

Ruth's Love Demonstrated

Ruth's Loyalty

Ruth's Opportunity to Leave Naomi

Ruth 1:6-9: Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the land of Moab, for she had heard in the land of Moab that the LORD had visited His people in giving them food. 7 So she departed from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. 8 And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 "May the LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. NASU

Naomi decided it was time to return to her home – everything she had had in Moab was gone and her reason for departing Judah had ended (*the LORD had visited His people in giving them food*). The LORD had brought back the rains in His grace; the famine was over. Naomi with *her two daughters-in-law with her* headed for Judah, leaving Moab behind them. ***Deuteronomy 7:9; Lamentations 3:20-26; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:11-13; Hebrews 11:1***

Deuteronomy 7:9: "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments

Lamentations 3:20-26: Surely my soul remembers and is bowed down within me. 21 This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. 22 The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. 24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I have hope in Him." 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. 26 It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the LORD.

1 Corinthians 1:9: God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Timothy 2:11-13: It is a trustworthy statement: for if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; 13 if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

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Hebrews 11:1: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Whenever, wherever, you see God moving, go to where He is working; if you are in sin, move out of your sin and move towards God's blessing...the first step in receiving the blessings of God is obedience. Although Naomi was not walking by 'faith,' she was bitter (as we will see) and in deep self-pity. However, she remained obedient and God will bless her for her obedience; here we can see the providence of God, Who is faithful, even when we are not. ***1 Samuel 15:22-23; Hebrews 12:1-2***

1 Samuel 15:22-23: Samuel said, "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. 23 "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry.

Hebrews 12:1-2: Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

As they traveled, Naomi's practical maternal instincts came out, and she instructed her two daughters-in-law to *return each of you to her mother's house* (to stay behind in Moab). Naomi's desire was for the welfare of Orpah and Ruth; she could not see any future for them in Judah. Placing the welfare of the Orpah and Ruth before her own we get a glimpse into the heart of Naomi. Having Ruth and Orpah in Judah with her, would have been beneficial but Naomi was placing the needs of her two daughters-in-law before her own.

Philippians 2:3-4

Philippians 2:3-4: Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

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Ruth 1:10-13: And they said to her, "No, but we will surely return with you to your people." 11 But Naomi said, "Return, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? 12 "Return, my daughters! Go, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said I have hope, if I should even have a husband tonight and also bear sons, 13 would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters; for it is harder for me than for you, for the hand of the LORD has gone forth against me. NASU

At first, both women refused to heed Naomi's request or advise (*we will surely return with you to your people*). With their refusal, Naomi, sensing their emotional response, attempted to pursue them to return to Moab based on logic. Naomi explained, she was too old to remarry (*I am too old to have a husband*) and too old to have sons (*Have I yet sons in my womb*).

Even if she would and did, Naomi questioned Orpah and Ruth about their willingness to wait for her sons to grow up. Naomi asked, '*...would you, therefore, wait until they were grown?*' And finally, Naomi pressed Orpah and Ruth by asking if, in the event they did wait and marry her sons, would they be able to have children of their own? Naomi saw that for Orpah and Ruth to remain with her would be a no-win situation for them.

Naomi's request and response to the women reveal her despair, deep disappointment, and sense of abandonment by the Lord. She saw herself as "bad luck" for the two women. Naomi is very logical and practical in her approach; her eyes were on her situation and not on the LORD; she is only forgetting that with God nothing is impossible. Additionally, as we mentioned earlier, Naomi and her husband, in moving to Moab, were outside the will of God; she needed to return to the land. *Isaiah 55:8-9; Jeremiah 32:27; Matthew 19:26*

Isaiah 55:8-9: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.

Jeremiah 32:27: "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?"

Matthew 19:26: And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

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Ruth 1:14-15: And they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. 15 Then she said, "Behold, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods; return after your sister-in-law." NASU

As bad as Naomi's walk and faith may appear, the affection and loyalty of Orpah and Ruth for Naomi gives a clear indication of the character and godliness of Naomi. Orpah finally takes Naomi's advice and turns back to Moab – and to her god's. Ruth would not leave Naomi – despite encouragement from Naomi. The actions of each lady demonstrate the reality of the God of Naomi in their life. Orpah had a fleeting faith, a faith built upon circumstances and situations, not the unfailing word and promises of God, as demonstrated by her return to Moab and the gods of Moab. Ruth, on the other hand, as we will see, demonstrated not just a love for Naomi but as for God as well; a faith built upon the solid foundation of the God of Naomi. **2 Kings 2:4-14; Matthew 5:14-16, 13:20-21; Luke 6:47-49; Hebrews 10:36-39; 1 John 2:19**

Matthew 5:14-16: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 13:20-21: "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.

Luke 6:47-49: "Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. 49 "But the one who has heard and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great."

Hebrews 10:36-39: For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. 37 FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY. 38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. 39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

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1 John 2:19: They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.